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The Ansgar Lutheran

Volume XXIX

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Number 51

Joy to the World

The
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Lord
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Is
|
Come



Photo: Jim Jernigan, Gendreau, N.Y.

News and Notes



Indianapolis Congregation Breaks Ground for New Church

On Sunday, November 25, 1956, ground was broken for the construction of the first unit of a new church for First Trinity Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Indiana. The cost of the building is roughly estimated at \$49,000.00 and is in an L shape with a chapel to seat about 200 people in one wing and parish hall and kitchen facilities in the other. There will be no basement.

The architect is Mr. Don Hawk of Indianapolis and the contractor is Mr. Anker Siersbeck, a member of First Trinity.

Farewell service in the old church was held on Sunday, November 18. The old property has been sold for \$16,000. A year ago the parsonage was sold, and two acres of land were purchased for the new church.

Services are now being held, until the completion of the new building, in a house on the new land. The house has been remodeled and painted and is in easy view of the progress being made on the new church.

The new address is 5321 E. 42nd Street and is about nine miles northeast of the old location. The pastor, Edward Eskildsen, now resides at 4142 Edgemere Ct., Apt. E-1.

First Trinity is one of the oldest congregations in the U.E.L.C. It was organized in 1868. The old church building was constructed in 1872. The congregation is now under the home missions of our synod in order to develop in the most effective way in its very promising new field. This is the only church of our synod in the state of Indiana. May God guide it to give glory to His kingdom.

Margaret Nissen, one of our Sudan Missionaries, has, as briefly noted last week, gone to Denmark for another operation. She felt going to Denmark would cost less and perhaps be as well. We have not heard when the operation will take place, nor have we heard how extensive it will be.

The address while in Denmark will be:

M. Nissen
% Kirurgisk Afdeling
Diakonissestiftelsen
Peter Bangsvej 1
Copenhagen, Denmark

Mission Finances: May we again express our appreciation for the free will gifts, that constantly keep coming for the foreign mission cause. We would like to call to your attention, that some missions have already this early in the church year received al-

most all of their quota. The Japanese Mission is far from receiving its share. The Santal has received about 93% of its quota, the Sudan about 78%, the Colombia about 77%, but the Japanese Mission has received only about 49%. Will you kindly notice the quotas as they are printed below each mission in the A. L. We do not wish to dictate to anyone where to place his mission contribution. But where there is no special choice, kindly keep the figures in mind and give either "Where It Is Most Needed," or to the mission in greatest need.—N. B. Hansen.

Mrs. James C. Peterson's address now 124 E Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Laurens, N. Y. Dr. Gustav S. Nordberg, 74, a distinguished educator and Lutheran clergyman (L.F.C.) died at his home in Oneonta, N. Y., on November 15th. He had served as Pastor Interim three times for the congregation in Laurens, N. Y., and attended many of the Atlantic District conventions.

He was Professor emeritus of Psychology and Philosophy at Hartwick College, Oneonta, N. Y., completing 25 years of teaching there last June. He was acting Dean of the College from 1943-1946.

Funeral services were held November 17th at Atonement Lutheran, Oneonta. Rev. Howard Walker, Pastor, officiated, assisted by Rev. C. C. Kloth, Laurens, and Dr. Miller F. Ritchie, Pres. of Hartwick College.

Dr. Nordberg was born August 2, 1882, in Trondheim, Norway, and came to this country with his parents at the age of 2. The family settled on a farm in Starbuck, Minnesota.

Pastor C. C. Kloth writes:

Dr. Nordberg has for years been a faithful and loving friend of our congregation, always ready and willing to serve us with word and sacrament during frequent vacancies. His service has been highly appreciated by our people and many are they who will keep him in loving remembrance. May his body rest in peace and the eternal light shine unto his soul.

(Continued on page 15)

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Much of our news is received from Religious News Service, and the News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council.

JOHN M. JENSEN, Editor
321 E. 8th Street
Spencer, Iowa

Earth Peace - - -

By The Editor

When the angels announced the good news of Christ's birth to the shepherds on the fields of Bethlehem they sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men with whom he is well pleased." This is a strange song. And thinking back upon the centuries which have passed since then, it may seem even stranger.

Even today when we think of the Middle East and many other places there is no peace. It is not gentle shepherds who are on guard in these regions, but it is soldiers with bayonets fixed to the teeth ready to kill.

Yet this message of Christmas and Christmas peace comes to us every year. The announcement by the angels is as new today as it was then. In these words God tells us what He will do for us. We are sure that the people this year will sing the Christmas songs with joy and new hope.

Christmas peace!

During the middle ages "Christmas peace" were often used. In the Northern European countries "Christmas Peace" started December 21, every year. This peace was to last three weeks. During that time crimes were given twice as heavy a punishment as otherwise. It was a crime to break the peace during the holy season. To insure this peace the citizens in towns and cities took upon themselves to be guardsmen of the peace. They went about seeing to it that no one kept the peace.

Legal prosecutions took place during these weeks. The most necessary work was done. People were urged to keep Christmas. The evil spirits that would disturb the peace came where men and women did necessary work.

These people had learned that so many things would be theirs as the gift of Christmas.

When we look back upon the many Christmas seasons we have experienced, we have also learned that it is not to get away from Christmas itself in the midst of the year. The strange thing is that the Christmas evenings we really remember are those where we seemed to get some help and blessing to others.

When we think of a few Christmas evenings we remember. We think of some in our childhood, where there was very little of earthly goods to make us happy. But it seems to us that when we did not have very much, when we only had a poor meal of pancakes Christmas evening that these pancakes tasted better than at other times. We also recall one Christmas in childhood when we only got one little cheap toy. But this brought us so much joy. We believe we got more out of that than of all the things the children get at Christmas does not depend on the things we get.

We also think of a few Christmas evenings as pastor and people, when we ministered to poor immigrants. We never forget the Christmas songs on the lips of some

of those people who had gone far away from both God and man. Christmas did something for them.

We begin to understand the Apostle John who as an old man writes his gospel. He looks back upon the time when Jesus came into his life. He writes, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father."

This is Christmas peace. It does not depend on peace in the world. It does not depend on health or whether you have much or little of this world's goods. It depends on Christ.

Christmas is God speaking into the heart of man in spite of the sin and evil in the world.

One of Britain's great economists, Josiah Stamp, gave a lecture over the radio before World War II just before he was killed in an air raid. He talked of the gold standard and other things. As he concluded his address he said: These things are of great value, but they are of no value at all compared to the securities I have in Christ my Savior.

You may have the whole world, but if you have no Christ, what do you have?

* * *

We are writing this just before Christmas; This editorial goes into some 12,000 homes. We were thinking of some 20 years ago when we wrote the first editorial in 1936 for The Ansgar Lutheran. What a new world we live in now. Countries have disappeared and new countries have come into being. Great powers have been reduced to second and third rate powers. Our church has changed. We hope it will soon be a part of a new church. Many of our friends at that time have since died and gone home to the Lord. The world outlook is not very bright.

But Christ is the same. We preach the same gospel as we preached then. We sing the same Christmas hymns. The words from Luke, "In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled," will be read from the pulpits this year again.

The worldly rulers think in terms of the whole world today.

But God also thinks in terms of the whole world. "I bring you good news of a great joy which is to all the people."

Let the world boast and plan. We may confidently sing our Christmas hymns and wish each other a blessed Christmas. It depends on God and not on man.

Wherever you are, dear reader, and no matter how your life is, the Christmas message is God's message to you, of peace and joy and eternal life.

Guard this Christmas peace with all your heart!

The Little Christmas Tree

A Story From Australia

By Agneta Stiller

There is no white Christmas in Australia. The heat may beat down on the shimmering corn fields. Mrs. Stiller, in Australia, a Lutheran pastor's daughter has written this story for The Ansgar Lutheran.

Christmas was at hand once more. Maud Hopeton always felt there was no real Christmas joy without some children to share in the festivity. As a child, she had found so much pleasure in trimming a little Christmas tree. In fact, a Christmas tree seemed to symbolise her childhood's happy memories of that sacred occasion.

What a joy it would be to her if she had children of her own. She would be a child with them around the Christmas tree, would sing with them the glad songs, tell the old but ever new stories of the little Jesus Whom God gave to mankind as the greatest of all gifts, and would have all the prettiest Christmas pictures hanging on the wall.

What was Christmas without a child? Many a time she felt the lack that a child had been denied her, but at Christmas time most of all. So what was the use of decorating a tree?

She looked out over the heat drawn shimmering maize field in the distance, then at the even row upon row of the promising peanuts. Unfortunately last year a good crop had been ruined by excessive wet conditions as no implement could be taken on to the ground to do the harvesting. They eventually let out the young hogs to handle them. She smiled at the remembrance—they made a perfect job of it; barely left a nut in the ground! It was either too much or too little rain which often decided the dividing line of the Australian farmer's destiny.

However, this year things looked promising. Even the two quiet house cows, standing knee deep in luscious juicy grass, revealed a state of prosperity! sedately swizzing their tails at the pestering flies, while leisurely chewing the cud — they had forgotten all about droughts and short rations. Yes, one ought not always to be complaining. God was good. If bad times came, they were offset again by good seasons. One should always be thankful.

Baa, baa! came from the house paddock. One of the pet sheep had discovered her. Maud's thoughts one more turned to Christmas. She pictured the ancient shepherds guarding their sheep the night that Jesus the Saviour was born—what a homely scene it must have been.

The past year had been a trying one, and in a way lonely. She and her husband lived with her family, as she had to help with the care of an aged and invalid father. There was little opportunity for entertaining, and friends in their turn seemed not to realize how at times she longed for some companionship. It was a funny thing, Maud Hopeton mused, that if a sick person were taken to the hospital, friends would regard it as natural that they were expected to call, and would call regularly, and even bring little tokens of good-will. Let a person be ill at home, few were the callers. Not that they were not well-meaning; but for the person in attendance, it could be lonely as well as for the patient. One had to forego many a chance of fellowship — and at times felt that one was losing touch with friends.



However, Maud's husband, Linton, had his own idea about the matter. His wife should have a Christmas tree anyhow, a small one. "You never know, Maud," he said, "some of the neighbour's children may call. You're too tired to invite them for a Christmas party, but if they should come across, it will be all ready, and you can give them some little present—a Christmas book, some sweets and nuts. If we can have it for ourselves—Christmas Eve. And I am determined to take you away for a few days. The others can manage the nursing for a short time. Say, if we slip off Christmas Day after the morning service—that will give you the chance to spend part of Christmas at home, yet a break away till after New Year will freshen you up a lot."

Whistling away, he found a strong container, carefully filled it with gravel and sand, and brought it inside.

Next he went in search of a small tree. He knew where plenty were available some miles away in a cyprus pine grove. He chose the crown of a well formed tree; that would have more lasting qualities than a baby pine, which would wilt very quickly. This way, too, the tree was spared.

It was a happy Linton who soon returned home with his little treasure. "See, there's the tree," he said, standing firmly in the prepared container, and adding some water. "It really is a beauty. Now you can go ahead and trim it as prettily as you like."

Before long, Maud had pulled out of a cupboard the little case which held her Christmas trimmings. Perhaps Linton was right. Some little child might turn up, and she could see real Christmas joy after all. With a longing in her heart, she decorated that tree as if trimmed in love for a child of her own.

Christmas morning had already passed. They had been to the Christmas service; had enjoyed the family dinner. Now they were ready to depart for their short vacation at the seaside. Maud cast one glance at the gay little tree standing on a side table. No child had come to admire its brightness—she could have saved all the trouble. She knew no better than ever, that one could not have the real Christmas spirit without a child in the home.

ell, so our holiday is over, and here we are home
" spoke Linton, opening the door of the car for his
They had come up the long drive between the tall
so quietly that their arrival had not been noticed.
wonder how they have been managing, and how Daddy
aid Maud.

h eager steps she hurried inside to let the family know
had returned. Straight into her father's room. What,
on the table was the little Christmas tree—still fresh
green!

a," said the old father, extending his hand, "it has been
a happy Christmas. Thank you so much for the little
Ben carried it in for me. Many are the hours I have
ere in bed, admiring it, and thinking of all the Christ-
s of my childhood—back in the old country." Restful-
lay back on the pillows.

s, I've thought again of all the Christmas hymns we
to sing, going round and round the Christmas tree.
the snow on the ground outside and the log fire crack-
away in the chimney. Thought of the excitement of
ng the Christmas parcels. Thought of Mother handing
each of us children a cup of lovely warm chocolate to

And the delicious golden oranges from Spain—it was
For Christmas and birthdays that our parents could af-
to buy us oranges; and on those occasions we received

one each.

"And sitting in the glow of the Christmas candles, Father
would read us the Christmas story. "And there were in the
same country shepherds abiding in the field . . ."

There was a happy, far away look in her father's eyes.

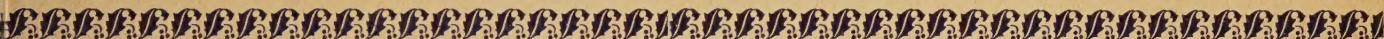
"Yes, I've seen it all again. Father and Mother, Jens and
Esther, Conrad and Hans.

"And before we went to bed, we would bow our heads as
Father prayed a little prayer. Then, hand in hand, we would
march round the tree once more, singing Grundtvig's love-
ly hymn:

"The happy Christmas comes once more,
The Heavenly Guest is at the door,
The blessed words the shepherds thrill,
The joyous tidings: "Peace, good-will."

"Come, Jesus, glorious, heavenly Guest,
Keep Thine own Christmas in our breast,
Then David's harpstrings, hushed so long,
Shall swell our jubilee of song."

A new joy surged into the heart of Maud Hopeton. Her
tree had not been in vain. It had brought a far greater
measure of joy than she had ever dreamed. It had brought
back the heart of a child in that of an old man. It was a
Christmas she would never forget.



and Visited Us in a Russian Prison

By Professor Helmut Gollwitzer

en they had eaten the thin soup every evening they
sit for a while on their bunks before crawling under
blankets. If one of you had been able to become invis-
ible and walk through the huts this picture would seem to
be the saddest and most characteristic of life in a P.O.W.
in the dim light of a few miserable lamps you would
see the thin faces of the men who stared motionless in front
of them, often with closed eyes, the dreamy figures leaning
against the posts of the bunks, each one as though
alone before the sorrow of the whole world. But
I had been able to see inside these men you would
have been astonished to learn that these were the happiest
moments of their miserable years: outward things vanish-
ed. The ugly smoke-blackened walls, the dirty coats lying
on the bunks disappeared, and in spirit we were at home.
I walked along the street, pressed the bell, which we saw
before our eyes. The familiar brown-painted door
opened, and we were embraced by those people who were
dearest in all the world; then they led us into the room.
The Christmas tree stood there, just as it always did, and
we could choose the carol which everyone was to sing. Eve-
ning after evening the dream was repeated and nobody grew
tired of it, least of all at Christmastime during the worst
of captivity.

Our working days like the others. There was a fes-
tival according to our standard, only because we had
some of our meagre ration. Whenever we could we
decorated the hut with fir branches, and we had even
managed to get hold of a few candles for the little Christ-
mas tree on which hung a few stars with silver paper stuck
on them. It was a mystery where this could have come
from in the wilderness! All this was not carried out with-
out opposition. The Russian camp leader had given
his permission, but some of the prisoners objected loudly

*We have read with great interest the book, Un-
willing Journey, by Professor Gollwitzer, who
was a German pastor taken prisoner by the
Russians in World War II. The incident here is
from his book.*

and even begged me to forego every reminder of Christmas:
"Only by not thinking about it—that's the only way I can
endure it; if you celebrate I shan't be able to stand it and I
shall hang myself . . ."

He did not hang himself; not because at the decisive mo-
ment he was too cowardly but because he had seen the
Christmas Light which shines in the darkness. Not "not to
think about it" but rather to think about it with all one's
might—that was the lesson that Christmas Eve taught us.
But what exactly were we to think about? To immerse one-
self in that dream could not of itself bring salvation. Home-
sickness filled our hearts too bitterly in those days. But,
when we heard the Christmas Gospel and discussed it, a
miraculous light seemed to have been turned on: "God hath
not forgotten those who sat in darkness." On earth there
was no power that could or would help us. Surrounded by
vast forests, we were forgotten and abandoned. We hardly
dared to hope that things would ever be different and yet
we could not stop hoping. Was it that someone was think-
ing of us and knew about us, someone stronger even than
Stalin and the N.K.V.D.?

"For behold, I bring you tidings of great joy!" We had
written Christmas Greetings on small, smooth pieces of
wood—for paper was rare here. At the head of my bunk
was one on which a friend had painted the words in John
14:19, since he had often heard me quote it in my sermons:
"Because I live, ye shall live also."

We had been deprived of everything that made life worth
living, and now here were written words which said that
life itself would not be taken from us. Whether repatria-
tion lay in store for us, or a grave in the frozen earth of
Russia—and so many of us were to be laid in it that winter
—this hard road led to life. That was certain because Christ-
mas had a meaning; that at least could not be taken from
us, and made us breathe a sigh of relief.

Reality and Christmas

By Professor Ethan Mengers

Christmas brings out the best in men. When the mood of the festival season finds room in a heart it elicits generosity, kindness, good wishes, forgiveness and love. Even so harsh and barren a soul as Scrooge, in Dickens' story, can be melted into something human, with some assistance from dreams and angels. There are impulses of unselfishness within the hearts of most men, and the Christmas season has power to unfetter these impulses, and kindle some of the finer things in human hearts.

Among our people there will be the re-uniting of families, and the deepening of the bonds that bind together the members of our homes. Many will travel great distances to spend the days with parents, brothers, sisters, and friends. Along with this there will also be the flocking together of great numbers in the churches of our land for services of worship on Christmas Day. Millions will be inspired and lifted up as they worship the Child of Bethlehem.

For many people these days will not only bring many human joys but also a deep sense of reality.

But for many others the sense of reality will be missing. The days will come and go and they will not feel that anything real or important has taken place. There are even some who, influenced by great humanistic and esthetic movements, are all athrill with the sentiments of the season, its great hymns, its lovely customs, and its booming good cheer, but who never get beyond the lovely trimmings of the occasion. Who does not know those kindly folks, for whom going to church on Christmas is a must, who drink in its beauties to the full but who nevertheless have not had a real Christmas?



The songs, the customs, the greetings are there. But the real Christmas is missing.

The fault cannot be in what Christmas is in itself. Christmas is essentially God's deed, and what God does is real. God does not deal with sham and imitations.

The difficulty lies elsewhere. It lies in the fact that so often we allow the customs, sentiments, and activities of the holiday season to keep us from reality instead of letting them help us to the experience of reality in our lives. To come face to face with what is real in Christmas we must first deal honestly with what is real in ourselves. We must sense the reality of our sin. We must face it without hypocrisy and without self-justifying escape in human generosity or geniality. We must see it as an offence to God, as a curse, and a hard thing.

The Gospel of Christmas is God's act in answer to our sin. He met the realness of our sin with the realness of His love. He sent His Son to earth to be our Savior. "Unto you is born this day a Savior!" That is the reality of Christmas.

When the Savior is real to you the other things of Christmas will be transformed. Then the customs and the greetings will be infused with substance and meaning.

Walking Where Jesus Walked

By Clarence E. Jensen

Pastor Clarence E. Jensen made a trip to the Middle East last summer. We have asked him to tell about his stay in the Holy Land.

It is really tremendous. Here we sit and think about the Holy Land and then in a few days we can be there. This was my experience last year. I had long had an urge to see the land where Jesus walked, and last summer my dream was realized.

From New York to England, then to Holland and France. On to Italy with the city of Rome. Then to Egypt . . . Each stop has its own story, but I was asked to write about the Holy Land.

Flying over the Red Sea reminded me of Israel's miraculous crossing. The desert looked very mountainous

and uninhabitable. Occasional nomad tents could be seen. We felt sure that we had a glimpse of Mt. Sinai. We saw the homes carved out of stone, the homes of the Nabataeans up until 1500 years ago. As we came close to the Dead Sea, we could see the large evaporation flats, where the Jews were collecting chemicals to be applied to the irrigated desert. Soon we flew across the Jordan River, past ancient Jericho, and to the Jerusalem Airport. What a thrill to get the first glimpse of Jerusalem, the Jewish headquarters.

The trip to Bethlehem was by car.

Recent conflicts necessitated a road which now is 14 miles long contains 73 hairpin turns. The country is very rough, barren, rocky, desolate.

Our headquarters for 9 days was an Orphanage for the Arabs, from where we made daily tours. We went to Hebron, where we saw the ancient oak trees under which Abraham pitched his tent about 4000 years ago. Here Abraham entertained three low travelers, who turned out to be angels, heavenly representatives who have an acorn from one of these

(Continued on page 7)

Silent Night, Holy Night

By Professor Theo. I. Jensen

Since the night when angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest," Christmas has been a time for singing, and many of the greatest hymns of the church sing the message of Christmas.

Possibly the most universally loved Christmas hymn is "Silent Night, Holy Night." Could it be because there is an instinctive feeling in the human breast that this hymn expresses something which is profoundly true about all meaningful Christmas observance, namely, that it is a time for quiet thought? It is a holy night, and its holiness calls for silence, the silence of quiet reflection.

It was so on the first Christmas. Though not entirely silent, it was deeply quiet. It was the quiet of joy of a secret in the hearts of two poor people who asked for room in a Bethlehem inn. It was the deep unspoken love of Mary as she gazed tenderly down upon the child in her arms. These two hearts must have ached to tell their secret, but there are some things too sacred to be shared with those who do not understand. They keep these things in their hearts, pondering their meaning, and in their hearts was Christmas. One night, while their joy was still new, the whole family slipped quietly and unknown out of Bethlehem's gate headed for a land far to the south. There was fear for the enemy behind and for the prospect of being alone in the strange land ahead. Still, there was quiet joy in their hearts, because He whom the world had not was sleeping at Mary's bosom.

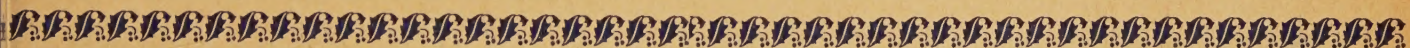
True, the angels sang of what had taken place, but not in the busy, noisy market place, but out on the quiet hills one lonely night. It was lowly shepherds



who heard it, godly men who, like the prophets long before, were waiting for this announcement, men who must often have wondered and asked one another as they kept watch over their flocks in the night, "When will this thing come to pass"? The answer came in the quiet of the night. When they knew, they hurried off to see this thing. They glorified and praised God for what they saw and heard, and returned quietly to their flocks in the field. And Wise Men from the East, after they had offered their gifts "departed to their own country by another way," probably more quietly even than they had come. What they had seen and heard was to be pondered and guarded, and if there was ever after a new light upon their way, it had been gotten in quiet adoration at the manger of the Christ Child.

The noisy activity and gaudy color of the modern market place at Christmas betray failure to understand the inner meaning of the Christmas miracle; in fact it may even betray painful consciousness of that failure! We must away from the confused and confusing noise of the world if we would know and have the secret of Christmas. It is most often in quiet places that Christ reveals his glory—the intimate family circle where God's Word is honored, the quiet hour of worship, the heart pondering what God has done through the gift of his Son.

"How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n." It is a holy night! Because holy, it is also a silent night, a night for quiet thought and prayer.



TALKING WHERE JESUS WALKED

(Continued from page 6)

ing home. In the town of Hebron we saw where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah are buried (Rachel, who died when Benjamin was born, is buried just outside Bethlehem.)

We visited the Shepherds' Field 2 miles out of Bethlehem, thought to be the place where the Shepherds heard the first Christmas Carol! From there we went to the traditional place of Jesus' birth. Three churches, Armenian, Greek Orthodox, and Roman, are situated beside one another, and at the street level, a passageway leads down to a large cave. All three churches use this sacred spot, with a twelve-pointed

star designating the birth place. Just to the opposite side of the cave is where the manger is said to have been. Here then the Shepherds and Wise men came to pay homage to the Christ. What a wonderful experience to bend my knees here also and rededicate my life to God.

We saw the three large reservoirs which King Solomon built. Two were empty, and the third was almost empty. This is dry country, indeed. Conduits brought water to Bethlehem, and there are some springs to which women came to draw water to carry home on their heads. We saw also the pool of Bethesda and the pool of Siloam.

We made a trip to Jericho. On the way we saw the place known as the

Good Samaritan Inn. At Jericho we saw a native in a Sycamore tree and were reminded of Zachaeus. Here was a wonderful spring known as the one Elisha had blessed and from it sweet waters do still flow. This serves for the city water supply and for irrigation. Excavations here reveal five different civilizations have built on this hill. The lowest part of the foundations points back to the day of Joshua when God caused the walls to fall in.

From Jericho we drove to the Dead Sea. It is 1308 feet below sea level. The water contains 28% solid matter such as salt and potash. These chemicals represent great value. They are a source of wealth for those who know how to develop them.

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Christmas In Poetry

The Angelic Song

By Alfred Grant Walton

Christmas is singing in my heart
In the holly wreath and the mistletoe,
In the Yule log crackling on the hearth
And the gladness only children know;
Singing a rapture that surges and swells
In snow-crisped carols and pealing bells,
A joy enthralling soul and sod,
Singing, singing GLORY TO GOD!

Christmas is singing in my heart
In a stable where restless cattle low,
In the watch of shepherds tending their flocks
And a Star that lingered long ago;
Singing of high and holy things
To the rhythmic beat of angels' wings
At a shrine that hailed a Saviour's birth,
Singing, singing PEACE ON EARTH!

Christmas is singing in my heart
In hopes and dreams half understood,
In a world redeemed from hate and strife,
Fashioned in faith and brotherhood,
Singing of better days to be,
When Christ is King and men are free;
And the Holy Child is born again
In a dream come true—GOOD WILL TO MEN!



Emmanuel

By T. O. Chisholm

Of all the names the Saviour bears,
(And each becomes him well),
One hath peculiar charm for me,
His name, Emmanuel.

"God with us"—now and evermore!

"God with us"—all is well!

His name we worship and adore,
His name, Emmanuel.

Emmanuel! Emmanuel!

God come from Heav'n, with men to dwell!

Our human life he entered in,

To share our sorrows, bear our sin.

O precious name, Emmanuel!

When the Angels Were Gone Away

By Martha Hird

One night, on far Judean hills, the stars
Looked down; the shepherds watched their sheep;
the earth

Lay still. And suddenly an angel spake —
The light of heaven shone and angels sang,
"Glory to God on high; good will and peace
On earth." And then the scene was done; again
The sky was black; the stars shone clear.

The angels bright were gone,
But those who saw that light, and those who heard
That song could not forget. "Let us now go,
And see," they said, "this thing now come to pass."
They saw, they worshiped and "made known
abroad"

The fact that God had come to men.

To us God gives that scene again each year.
Each year we learn anew that unto us
A Child is born, and unto us a Son
Is given. Dear heart, when precious Christmas
days

Are done, and angels bright have gone away,
We still may tell abroad the fact that God
To us came down.

"And the Child Grew"

By Gertrude E. Wartchow

The Shepherds bowed before Him,
And Wise Men came to bring
Their best gifts to the Infant
They hailed as "new-born King."

I wonder, when He grew up
And preached beside the sea,
Were they with those who answered
When He said:—"Follow Me?"

They, who had come to worship
The night that He was born,
Where were they when His forehead
Wore only crown of thorn?

Do some of us at Christmas
Adore the new-born King;
Sing carols at the manger
And bring an offering;

But follow not the teachings
Of Him our songs adored,
And fail to love and serve Him,
The grown-up, risen Lord?



THE WEEK AT DANA

your midcontinent college

any readers of this column will be travelling during holidays. With the following lighthearted theme written in a freshman English class, we send our best wishes Godspeed on your journeys!

WESTWARD BOUND

But it's a secret and your dad told me not to tell, so I'm hushed about it, will you?" my mother asked. But it's a secret and Mother told me not to tell you, don't say a word!"

But it's a secret, Larry, and don't you dare tell or catch it!"

And so we each passed the secret down to the next youngest member of the family until everyone knew we were going to California for Christmas. We never find out what Dad thought when what he supposed to be a big surprise to us turned out to be only the all O.K. to go ahead and continue the planning. Each of us immediately burst forth with countless ideas about the trip and the route we should take. Anyone says that we couldn't have come up with such plans and ideas if we hadn't spent many hours dreaming and talking about the big trip.

* *

Why is it that the trunk of the car is never the right size or shape for the suitcases and boxes that are to be packed in it? We seemed to have trouble packing in the car. Then there are those last minute things. It took us quite a while before everyone had finished packing back to the house for some forgotten article.

Two thousand miles is not a short trip, and finding rough things to occupy three restless youngsters gets to be quite a job after a few hours of riding. We could never decide which one of the three should sit in the front seat with the folks. "Three" was just the wrong number to have in the back seat, especially with a little brother who constantly teased and kicked or found a million things with which to pester his sister. And then, there were two of us always getting the best of the third one.

Of course, there was the problem of food. We were always hungry. Those sandwiches and candy bars just can't take the place of Mother's meat and potatoes. Finally Dad decided to fill us up. Every time one of us complained of hunger, he stopped at the next cafe and made us eat until we were so full we felt we could never eat again. That seemed to do the trick. Once we were filled up, we didn't have any more trouble.

We were an excited group of people when the mountains came in sight. No one could get in the right place that he could see. After leaning out the window to look straight down into the valley below, and after switching seats and taking turns at the windows, we finally got a breath-taking view of the wonders of nature.

These things made our trip what it was, these and the views by mountain streams, in the Southwest, hikes on trails leading down to the foot of tumbling waterfalls . . . and those nasty stickers from the cactuses of the Arizona desert, and the millions of other little things that made our trip a memorable one.

Bonnie Hagedorn, Linn Grove, Iowa

An Informal Review of an Unusual Publication

By Norman C. Bansen

There walks among us a quiet, unassuming figure. He is a theological professor and a pastor. When he preaches there is the ring of conviction in his voice. Those who are fortunate to know him as a friend never fail to respond to the warmth and sincerity of the man. Those who knew him some years ago as a college professor of Scandinavian literature remember the stimulating lectures and searching questions that characterized the course.

Today this man, Dr. Paul C. Nyholm, finds time in a busy schedule of teaching and preaching to edit one of the most unusual of literary annuals, *Dansk Nytaar*. This is not the whipped cream type of annual that is all too common during the holiday season. It is not a collection of too-pretty-to-be-true photographs and art. There is substance in this annual. That is no doubt the reason it has attracted attention on both sides of the Atlantic, and, save in his own country—the UELC—the professor-editor has received many a tribute from those who recognize editorial excellence when they see it.

In the annual, designed to appeal to Danes and to their descendants, most of the articles are in Danish, but there is this year a substantial English section. Many pages are devoted to recording the activities of the two Lutheran synods of Danish background, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. There are photographs of the new church buildings, the most striking of which is Nazareth Lutheran Church in Coulter, Iowa.

The editor of *Dansk Nytaar* is also interested in literature, music and art. The annual has thus become a remarkable anthology of the year's production of creative artists in Danish-American circles.

Those who appreciate poetry will not want to miss Jens Nyholm's sensitive tribute, "Sang til Jylland," or August Bang's "Døden," reminiscent of some of the best of England's metaphysical poets. The editor has also presented an interview with August Bang, together with a photo from the Cedar Falls workshop of this most original Danish-American poet and editor.

Among the delightful bits of Dan-Americana is Johannes Knudsen's "Julebefordring" and Ebba Trampe Launsby's "Peter Olsen fra Wisconsin." The Danish Countess Trampe is represented in the music section with an original composition. Professor Paul E. Neve's musical setting for Psalm 46, "God Is Our Refuge," is also included. It is worth the price of the book—and more.

The cultural attache of the Royal Danish Embassy in Washington, Carlo Christensen, has written a most appealing and readable account of his Copenhagen boyhood, "Min Barndoms Gade." From the pen of pioneer Pastor P. Rasmussen, who yet walks among us, there is a Christmas meditation that makes one say, "This is as solid and as genuine as the staunch old man himself." (And in my own mind there are echoes of Pastor Rasmussen leading his Canadian congregation in the singing of "O Land of Our King!")

The primate of the Church of Denmark, Bishop H. Fuglsang-Damgaard, has sent a greeting; the new president of the UELC, Rev. William Larsen, has a contribution in the English section—a contribution that makes one aware that the size of an organization is no measure of its power.

There is more that this reviewer would like to mention in detail: "Second Thoughts on the Danish Heritage" by Verner Hansen, editor of *Lutheran Tidings*; Hannah Nyholm's account of the Grundtvigian influence on American education. (Concluded on page 15)

THE LUTHER LEAGUE

John W. Nielsen, Editor

MISSIONARY LIFE

By Dr. J. M. T. Winther

Missionary life is undeniably a life under stress and strain. Very much of what one has been used to had better be forgotten because it is not obtainable. Things to which one has been averse may have to be not merely tolerated but even graciously accepted. Missionary life is not and never can be a life of ease. But if anyone therefore should think that it would be a life hard to endure, he would actually be as much at fault as the one who thought of it as a comfortable life!

There is one thing in missionary life that makes things actually different from what they seem to be. There is a great transforming power in the Lord's presence. To begin with, we may think that He calls and commands us to work for Him. Then we discover that it is actually a privilege that He has granted us. We even see that He works with us, He directs us, and He strengthens us for the work. We notice that He confirms the Word we preach. And a gloriously happy day may dawn when we exclaim: "Lord, all our works, why, Thou hast done them for us!" The prophet Isaiah had such an experience (Isa. 26:12).

It is this fact that makes missionary life not merely endurable, but enjoyable—something altogether too good to forego. It becomes a necessity for one's very existence, as much as to rest or sleep, as indispensable as to eat and drink, as essential as to breathe. This is surely the experience of all true workers in the Lord's vineyard, but it seems to me we see more of it here on the mission field than elsewhere—maybe because we need it more. And sometimes we are permitted to see it so plainly that even a blind man could not deny it because it is so palpable.

A young farmer-boy had a dream one night that if he would go to his nearest city, then he would see and hear something that would be of vital importance for him and his future happiness. As soon as he was awake he got on his bicycle and pedaled 20 miles up over a steep mountain range. He criss-crossed the city, but found nothing out of the ordinary, and toward evening he decided disappointedly to return.

As he was leaving the city, he saw something unusual. Outside a little house was a box nailed up and

in it was an open book. He went over to look at it for it did not look like a book-store. What he read made him more than willing to follow an invitation to go inside and ask questions.

Inside sat a shoe-maker, but he was able to do more than repair worn-out shoes, and the young man had gotten an entirely new purpose before he left the little shop. He went to a Lutheran church only a few miles from his home; he was thoroughly converted and at once fired with zeal to lead others to Christ, so he was allowed to enter our Bible School. He had abilities enough, but defects in his character, not yet overcome, especially short temper, made it inadvisable to make him a full time evangelist, so he is still a farmer and a worker for the Lord only in his spare time.

A woman, deserted by her husband and left to take care of three little children, lived a life of constant want and distress. One night she happened to look out and saw at once a radiant cross in the sky. She went outside to see better what it was. For several minutes she saw that cross and saw it at a place where no man could have put it. She knew enough to connect the cross with the little Christian church, and the sight had impressed her so that she wanted to learn something about that church. In the church she learned to know that Christ had made the cross into a living way to heaven. She, too, was converted, and although she was still miserably poor and had to work hard, she became a happy Christian. She, too, has been here at the Bible School and is now working in her church teaching others about the cross of Christ as the power of salvation.

These are not everyday occurrences, but they are actual facts, each happening about four years ago. That the results are not mere passing emotional flurries. Had there been space I should like to have mentioned an experience from the opening of the spring term of our Bible school. Maybe that can come later.

May I just mention here that my daughter, Mary, from whom you had a letter in the October 22nd *Ansgar Lutheran*, at a regular medical check-up was found in need of an operation. The doctors feared cancer. It, however, proved to be non-malignant, and the operation was performed five days ago. The doctors wondered that she had been able to do her work and are wondering even more at the remarkably rapid recovery. In about five or six days she is expected to leave the hospital. We are exceedingly thankful that everything has gone so fine. It seems that the Lord still must have some work for us to do here in this land. The task here is far greater than when I came here in 1898 as there now

more than 90 million people or more than double the number in 1898.

We are grateful to the Lord and to all those whom He has used to send us and keep us here. But we do need your prayers for we have nothing in ourselves and the powers of darkness are very active, and what we know least about is the length of time we are given to carry on the work.

Best greetings to every reader from your old representative, as well, as busy, and as happy as ever.

J. M. T. Winther

(Dr. Winther certainly ranks among the elders of all American Lutheran mission work, and yet, as his letter indicates, in interest and spirit he is still young. We, too, rejoice in Maya's successful operation and promising recovery, and pray that God will continue to sustain his father and daughter on the mission field of Japan. J.W.N.)

Driving Directions

Traffic rules vary in the different states, but good driving rules are universal. How do you rate? Mark each statement T (true) or F (false).

1. Horn should operate with a loud, clear signal.
2. At sixty miles an hour you drive blind for 88 feet when you take your eyes off the road for one second.
3. When meeting oncoming traffic you should dim your headlights by switching to low beam.
4. At night, to pass another car, a flicker of your lights is a better signal than a horn.
5. The most important factor in safe driving is the driver.

How did you make out? The answers should have been true in every case.

(From the forthcoming book, **For Fellows Only**, by Howard Clark to be printed by Zondervan.)



REMEMBER . . .

This Is Your Christmas Chimes

Buy It

Read It

Sell It

Give It

People and Places

KENMARE:

Pastor E. W. Petrusson installed the newly elected officers of the Nazareth Luther League of **Kenmare, North Dakota** at the 11:00 a.m. worship service on November 18. New officers are **Roger Gissel**, president; **Nona Gissel**, vice-president; **Constance Hillestad**, secretary; **Karen Goetsch**, treasurer; **Carolyn Eklund**, Pocket Testament secretary; and **Gay Dolan**, program chairman.

Pastor Silas Larsen, Trinity Lutheran Church, rural **Kenmare**, chose as his topic the Mizpah Benediction (Gen. 31:49) when he spoke at the farewell given by Nazareth Leaguers for Pastor and Mrs. Petrusson on November 25. The Petrussons are moving to **California**.

Leaguers who took part in the program were **Bonnie Anderson**, **Gay Dolan**, **Carol Fox**, **Nona** and **Roger Gissel**, **Judith McClung**, and **Mavis Rytter**.

California, Here We Come!

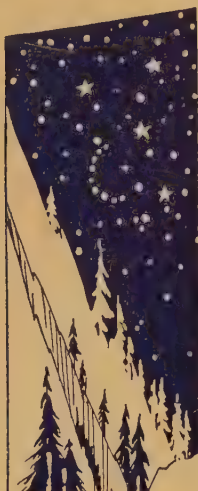
Pastor Norlan L. Hanson of **Owatonna, Minnesota**, announces the following appointments to what will become a full-slate of frantically busy district transportation directors for the **International Luther League Convention of the UELC** to be held at **Fresno** next June.

Phyllis Kloster of **Albert Lea** will direct arrangements in the **Minnesota District**. **Pastor Roland Hansen** of **Oregon** will manage the **Wisconsin** situation, while **Ruth Aaskov** of **Cumberland Center, Maine** will be confronted with the tremendous task of arranging cross-country transportation for the leaguers from the **East Coast**. Other district directors will be announced as their names become available.

Northfield:

The confirmation classes of **St. Peter's Lutheran Church of Northfield, Minnesota** have organized as a Junior Luther League with **Mrs. George Olson** as advisor. **Bryce Olson**, **Delwin Peterson**, **Delores Peterson**, and **Lee Topp** were elected officers. Even though the younger members of the Junior League can't participate in the **California Convention**, they have pitched in with real enthusiasm to make it possible for others to have a memorable experience.

BY THE FIRESIDE



UNDER A STAR

*Born to be Arbiter,
Wonderful, Counselor
Under a star.*

*Taunted repeatedly,
Never such infamy,
Suffered Gethsemane
Under a star.*

*Jesus, the marvelous,
Died on the cross for us.*

*Time cannot mar
Life so victorious
Under a star.*

Harriet Swan Spence.

THE LEGEND OF THE
GLOW WORM

It was Christmas night—the first Christmas night of all. Above Bethlehem the stars shone brightly like altar lights, as if they knew that beneath, in the manger, the Christ Child lay, and their soft radiance would please the Baby King. Above, in the rough rafters, two doves cooed a lullaby: it was the first carol, welcoming the great Little One. Near by the ox and ass warmed the chill air with their fragrant breath; and in memory of that night, it is said that their descendants kneel down every Christmas Eve at midnight. Around and beneath the Holy Child was spread the soft hay, making a cosy bed for His tiny body.

But in a corner a little insect sighed: "What can I do for the Christ Child?—The stars, the doves, the ox and the ass, even the straw—all are doing something for his comfort, but I—I can do nothing!" Then came a lovely thought: a leaflet lay in the corner, shiny and green. "I will carry that to the Christ Child," whispered



BORN, A SAVIOUR

Luke 2:11

By Robert B. Pattison

The earth seemed full with evil and with shame,
Sin was exalted, goodness laughed to scorn;
Then into human need the Saviour came —
A Child is Born!

A Child whose infant hand held peace on earth,
A Child whose manger cradled hope again;
Glad tidings of great joy were in that birth —
Good will to men!

God's Gift to men that first, glad Christmas Day,
God's Gift to each, God's Gift eternally.
Would we show thanks? Look up to Christ and pray:
Be born in me!



the little worm; and picking it up with great difficulty, brought it to the Baby, Who stretched out His tiny hand, and touched both leaf and insect. His lips parted and smiled with delight at the soft little live thing and the smooth leaf; then, presently, He fell asleep. And the insect crept back to his corner, content, it had done what it could.

But it did not know that it carried away with it some of the soft radiance of the Christ Child. It shone with a light all other insects of its kind have carried ever since, and you may see them, like fairy candles, on a Summer's night in many an English country lane.

—From St. Nicholas' Review.

A SAVIOUR BORN . . .

Jesus, a Saviour born

Without:

Without the inn, refused with scorn,
Cast out:

Cast out for me, my Saviour King,
Cast out to bring this lost one in.

Jesus, a Saviour born:

A Man:

A Man of sorrows, smitten, torn
By stripes:

By stripes, O Lord, my soul is
healed,

By stripes, Thy stripes, my pardon
sealed.

Jesus, a Saviour born

To save:

To save at night, at noon, at morn,
To keep:

To keep from sin, from doubt, from
fear,

To keep, for lo! the Keeper's here.

Jesus, a Saviour born,

A King:

A King! exalt His glorious horn
And sing.

Oh sing, ye Heavens! He burst His
grave,

And sing, O earth! He lives to save.
Bramwell Booth.

THE HARD ROAD BACK

It's a long, hard road back to Bethlehem,
And many have lost the way;

War's trumpets have drowned the angels' song,
And the wise men have gone astray:

But the face of the sky shows the star of the morn
Still over the place where our Lord was born.

It's a long, hard road back to Bethlehem,
Yet the world might be reconciled,

If only man could find his way back
To the heart of the little Child:

But the way is hedged up and men's eyes are blind,
Though the love of God is still wondrous kind.

It's a long, hard road back to Bethlehem,
Yet there's hope when our hearts are torn,

And our eyes look up to that Lamb of God
Who for man's redemption was born;

And the signs of the times are most wondrous clear
That the day of His own return is near!

W. T. McGregor, M.A.

WALKING WHERE JESUS WALKED

(Continued from page 7)

Further up the Jordan River, we saw an area where all Christendom agrees that the Children of Israel crossed and here is the place Jesus was baptized. We moved on along the west bank of the River Jordan to Jerash, one of the Decapolis cities Jesus reached to. This city gave one a good understanding of the architecture honoring the many Greek and Roman gods and goddesses. Pillars still stand reaching 60 feet high and eighteen to twenty feet in circumference. One marvels at the work and expense of honoring such gods! Not far from here are the ancient quarries of Solomon. The stones were cut to fit a certain size in a construction. One such stone was cut, moved to the surface, and left there. Its estimated weight is in excess of 1200 tons!

Another day we went up to Samaria, stopping at Jacob's well close to the town of Sychar. This made the story of the Woman from Samaria very real. It is across a small valley from here to Mt. Gerizim.

A town called Nablus is the home of the Samaritan people, who still carry on as of old. They still claim a succession of priests, still deny the coming of the Christ. They also claim to have the oldest copy of the Pentateuch. Close by we saw the ruins of King Ahab's Ivory Palace, the ruins of the temple in which Herod allowed the beheading of John the Baptist. We entered the prison where he was held captive, and nearby saw a tomb where his remains are said to be. A level area not far away is now used for a threshing floor.

One great experience was to stop at Jericho to see the supposed site of the birth of Mary, and Lazarus' home, and to visit what is known as Lazarus' tomb. Enroute to Jerusalem we moved to Mt. Olives, the route Jesus took. The home site of Simon the Leper was pointed out. Here Jesus kept the last supper and instituted the Lord's Supper. Then we moved over the crest to a spot where Jerusalem first comes into view. Here it was that Jesus wept

over Jerusalem because they rejected Him and His message of salvation. We went down the west slopes to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus agonized in prayer, and crossed the Kedron Valley to the gates of Jerusalem. On the large flat temple area, one was reminded of historic happenings. The temple of Jesus' day was destroyed by Titus as predicted, and at present there is a Moslem Mosque. This is also the site known as Mt. Moriah, where Abraham came to sacrifice Isaac. Many battles were fought here, and Jerusalem has been in the hands of many people. To the west is the street known as the Weeping Wall. In the past, Jews wept here every Friday lamenting the destruction of their temple. We followed through the narrow, dirty, smelling streets to the area known as Pilate's Hall. The Arch still stands from which

he made known to the motley crowd that he found no fault in Jesus, but later gave in to their demands. Then we walked the "Doloroso" road, or the way of suffering. This led through the Damascus Gate out to the Place of the Skull, Golgotha, where Jesus was crucified. Nearby is a garden known as Joseph's Garden. It seems likely that this is the place where Jesus was entombed. I spent some time there rejoicing that the tomb was empty and that Jesus is my resurrected Lord.

My stay in the Holy Land was over. I went on to Damascus where the Apostle Paul was converted. From there we went to Beirut and then to Germany and Copenhagen. Soon I was back in Elk Horn, Iowa, again.

As I look back this was the most wonderful trip I have ever taken. I walked where Jesus walked!

EVERY HOME SHOULD HAVE A

CHILD'S CHRISTMAS CHIMES

Edited by Marilyn Jersild



This year's CHILD'S CHRISTMAS CHIMES contains interesting stories, legends, poems, and songs, all centered around the Babe in the Manger and the spirit of love which fills our hearts each year at His birth. Also included are a group of children's prayers, stories of great men who wrote Christmas music, and a Christmas Service for the whole family to take part in around the Christmas Tree.

Order a copy of "Child's Christmas Chimes" at once for your children so that they may prepare themselves for the true Christian meaning of the Christmas season. It will enrich every child's conception of Christmas.

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d with thanks.

Blair, Nebraska, December 8, 1956.

P. V. Hansen, Treasurer.

AN INFORMAL REVIEW OF AN UNUSUAL PUBLICATION

(Continued from page 9)

The editor's amazingly complete section on the news of year in Danish-American circles; and the many fine and-white illustrations, including those in the article Olga Strandvold Opfell. What has been mentioned convince those who read Danish—even haltingly—those who have Danish-reading friends that here is a tid holiday addition to any library.

ask Nytaar for 1957 has convinced me that we have us an editor of unusual talent. To him go our thanks is superior contribution to Danish-American culture.

AND NOTES

(Continued from page 2)

or George Demant of Camp Douglas, Wis., has accept-call to Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Fresno, Calif. He ts to take charge March 1, 1957.

plain Stanley Carlsen's address is 1714 Highland Ave., y, Georgia.

Railroad Cars filled with used clothing from the l Thanksgiving Clothing Drive have been collected aha, Neb., by the churches of the National Lutheran il and Missouri Synod. These cars had a total of 75,- pounds of clothing, one of the largest shipments of ng collected and dispatched from any place in the l States.

NATIVITY

Edward K. Ziegler

Born in a stable 'mid oxen and sheep,
Mother love warmed him in manger asleep;
Jesus our Savior, God's own baby boy
Lay smiling while archangels chorused their joy.

Above him the star shone so silent and bright,
And shepherds in wonder beheld a great light;
In reverence and worship they came where he lay,
Then knelt by the manger, their heads bowed to pray.

In stately rich splendor wise men from afar
Brought three priceless treasures, as led by a star,
They came from old Egypt, from Hind and Iran
To offer their gifts to the Savior of man.

Now what can I offer, O Lord of my heart?
For all of my treasure, and all the world's art
Are tinsel and playthings, scarce worthy for thee;
Oh, be born in my heart! Be incarnate in me!



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Edited By Lyle Paulsen

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